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# Eighteenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 1470 (2003) of 28 March 2003, the Security Council urged the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to complete phase 2 of its drawdown plan as outlined in my seventeenth report (S/2003/321), and to embark on phase 3 as soon as practicable. By the same resolution, the Council requested me to provide it with detailed plans for the remainder of the drawdown process, including options for faster or slower withdrawal, depending on the security situation and the capacity of Sierra Leone's security sector to take responsibility for internal and external security. The present report was prepared pursuant to that request. In addition to providing an assessment of the prevailing security situation in Sierra Leone and the progress made on the benchmarks that have guided the drawdown of UNAMSIL, the report also describes ongoing efforts to consolidate peace in Sierra Leone, including the activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the efforts to facilitate national recovery.

## II. Security situation

2. During the reporting period, the security situation in Sierra Leone remained generally stable. There were no major incidents that threatened to cause renewed instability since the armed attack on the Wellington Barracks armoury in Freetown by some former soldiers on 13 January 2003. However, these incidents and the related escape from arrest of former Armed Forces Revolutionary Council/ex-Sierra Leone Army (AFRC/ex-SLA) leader Johnny Paul Koroma continued to serve as a reminder of the significant challenges that face Sierra Leone's security sector. Unconfirmed reports indicate that Johnr Paul Koroma, who had also been indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, was recently killed in Liberia, where he reportedly had been leading an armed group.

3. Another recent challenge is the restiveness on the part of some former elements of the Civil Defence Force (CDF), the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the AFRC/ex-SLA who are concerned about indictment by the Special Court for Sierra Leone. In addition, the arrest of former CDF National Coordinator and Minister of Internal Affairs, Hinga Norman, has provoked resentment among his supporters, who have attempted to stage violent protests. In this connection, there

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are persistent, though unconfirmed, reports that some groups may be plotting violent actions to disrupt the work of the Special Court.

4. It would be recalled that, at the Consultative Group meeting held in Paris in December 2002 between the Government of Sierra Leone and its development partners, the Government had undertaken to dismantle the CDF by January 2003. To date, the CDF continues to exist as an organized group and, in some areas, its structures operate almost in parallel to those of the Government's security sector. In the aftermath of the incident at Wellington Barracks referred to above, and as a result of lingering doubts about the reliability of the Sierra Leone armed forces, there have been renewed calls to transform the CDF into a Territorial Defence Force. The Government has, however, denied that it intends to form such a force.

5. The influx of a large number of young men to the diamond mining areas of Kono district and Tongo Fields, and the activities of local militant youth groups who resent the influx of "outsiders" also remain a potential source of instability. As a result of inadequate State policing in these areas, the youth groups, whose membership consists mainly of former combatants, have continued to challenge the local authorities. In early June, the Government formed a Task Force headed by the Secretary to the President, with responsibilities for ensuring that unregulated mining activity is brought under effective control in order to minimize the threat it poses to the country.

6. These challenges notwithstanding, the overall security threat from internal factors in Sierra Leone is assessed as relatively low in the short term, particularly due to the gradual manner in which UNAMSIL continues to conduct its drawdown and the concerted efforts of the Mission and Sierra Leone's security agencies in rigorously monitoring the security situation. In this context, UNAMSIL continues to maintain an appropriate level of capability to deter possible renewed instability and has provided support for the deployments and operations of the national army and police throughout the country. The Mission has also provided security for the activities of the Special Court, including protecting the Court's Bonthe Island prison, where indictees are being held. It should be noted that the vast majority of the people of Sierra Leone have welcomed the fact that those who are considered to bear the greatest responsibility for their suffering are finally being held accountable.

7. The climate of instability in Sierra Leone's immediate neighbourhood continues to add to the internal security risks. The conflict in Liberia, in particular, could have a far-reaching destabilizing effect on Sierra Leone and on the wider Mano River subregion. The fighting between the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) has created conditions of insecurity in the border areas. Combatants deserting both sides and seeking refuge in Sierra Leone have given rise to fears about a possible spillover in the fighting. Equally worrisome are the significant numbers of former Sierra Leonean combatants who are reported to be fighting as mercenaries in both Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. There is concern that, in the long term, these elements may return as organized groups seeking to seize power or to control the country's natural resources. However, it is hoped that the progress being made in the effort to restore normalcy in Côte d'Ivoire and a positive outcome from the Liberia peace talks, which started in Akosombo, Ghana, on 4 June, could improve the insecure subregional environment. At the same time, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has expressed concern that the recent announcement of

the indictment of President Charles Taylor of Liberia by the Special Court could have a negative impact on the Akosombo peace talks.

## III. Benchmarks

8. It would be recalled that in my initial proposals for the drawdown of UNAMSIL as presented in my fifteenth report to the Security Council (S/2002/987), I indicated that progress in strengthening the capacity of the Sierra Leone police and armed forces would constitute the key security benchmark that should guide the pace of the drawdown process. In addition, I identified other benchmarks, which consisted of priority tasks aimed at consolidating stability in Sierra Leone before the final withdrawal of UNAMSIL. These include completing the reintegration of former combatants, consolidating State authority throughout the country, as well as restoring effective government control over diamond mining activities, and progress towards resolving the conflict in Liberia, which impacts directly on Sierra Leone's stability.

9. The joint mechanisms established by UNAMSIL and the Government of Sierra Leone to monitor and evaluate the major factors relating to the key security benchmark continued to meet regularly. They consist of the National Security Coordination Group, which takes stock of the prevailing security situation and identifies potential threats to State security, the Steering Committee that coordinates the efforts to strengthen the Sierra Leone police, and an integrated planning group within UNAMSIL, which evaluates data relating to all benchmarks collected in the field by UNAMSIL's troops, military observers and civil affairs officers. The invaluable information gathered and processed through these bodies has guided the process of assessing the benchmarks and determining areas of the country that were ready for handing over to Sierra Leone's security sector.

### A. Strengthening the capacity of Sierra Leone's police

10. By its resolution 1436 (2002) of 24 September 2002, the Security Council authorized the deployment of up to 170 United Nations civilian police (UNCIVPOL) in UNAMSIL, who would be recruited on the recommendation of the Steering Committee, to assist in the training of the Sierra Leone police. To date, a total of 128 UNCIVPOL personnel have been deployed to UNAMSIL for this purpose, based on the recommendations of the Steering Committee. The UNCIVPOL personnel consist of 32 trainers who participate in the training of new recruits and national police personnel who are already serving, as well as 83 officers who are deployed at 17 team sites to provide mentoring at police stations across the country. The mentoring process focuses on improving basic policing skills and training on police procedures. The remaining 13 UNCIVPOL personnel are deployed at UNAMSIL headquarters to support the officers working in the field.

11. The Steering Committee has requested the United Nations to provide police personnel with specialized skills who would assist in developing the capacity of the Sierra Leone police in the strategic areas of policing diamond mining, cross-border policing, airport policing and policy planning. Efforts are under way to fill these posts. A team of Sierra Leone police officers, accompanied by an UNCIVPOL officer, recently visited South Africa to familiarize themselves with procedures for

diamond mining policing in that country. Pursuant to that visit, South Africa has indicated that it would consider providing assistance to the Sierra Leone police in this important area.

12. The process of recruiting and training new police cadets continues to face challenges, arising mainly from the limited capacity of the only functioning police training school at Hastings, near Freetown. As indicated in my earlier reports, the Sierra Leone police intends to recruit 1,000 cadets annually over a period of three years, in order to increase the strength of the police from the current level of about 6,800 to the pre-war level of 9,500 personnel. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1436 (2002) in September 2002, a total of 592 new police recruits have graduated from the training school. Another 199 cadets are expected to graduate in July 2003. The Sierra Leone police recently created a department to oversee a continuous recruitment process with the assistance of UNCIVPOL and the Commonwealth police advisers. Efforts are also ongoing to enhance the capacity of the police training school from 200 to 300 cadets per intake. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are providing assistance for this project.

13. UNAMSIL and the Sierra Leone police are closely coordinating, in the framework of the Steering Committee, to ensure that plans for the deployment of new police recruits and the requisite adjustment to already existing police deployments are carefully synchronized with UNAMSIL's drawdown plan. However, the effective deployment of adequate numbers of the national police in response to UNAMSIL's drawdown has been limited by lack of commensurate progress in the construction or rehabilitation of police infrastructure in the provinces and inadequate transport and communication equipment, for which the Government of Sierra Leone will need significant assistance from donors. The cost of minimal deployments to ensure law and order in areas vacated by UNAMSIL during phase 2 of its drawdown has been estimated at $2 million. The national police deployment plan in response to phase 3 of UNAMSIL's drawdown is currently under preparation and is expected to be incorporated in the national budget for 2004. It is broadly estimated that the overall deployment of additional police officers in response to UNAMSIL's drawdown will cost approximately $16-18 million.

14. Although the Government is committed to taking over the responsibility for internal security from UNAMSIL and is devoting significant efforts towards the strengthening of the police, donor assistance is badly needed in this particular area. Any further delay in the expansion of the capability of the Sierra Leone police could result in a security vacuum in the areas vacated by UNAMSIL, with serious security risks.

## B. Strengthening the capacity of the armed forces

15. The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) continued to take steps to overcome the challenges posed by its restructuring and to provide external security for the country. The restructuring of the force, which should result in the reduction of its personnel from the current level of about 14,000 to about 10,500 troops, is ongoing. With the support of the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT), the army has introduced various initiatives to enhance its reputation as a disciplined, reliable and professional institution. A third of the

RSLAF troops are currently deployed in the Sierra Leone-Liberia border areas. This has severely overstretched the force as its operations are still being hampered by lack of the necessary infrastructure, inadequate logistics, and the poor state of its aged transport fleet. These challenges will have to be addressed urgently if the army is to have any chance of meeting its operational obligations along the border areas without UNAMSIL's support.

16. Through its short-term initiative to address the shortage of barracks, the army is seeking to establish some garrison sites in the hinterland, from which operational deployments to the border areas can be mounted. To this end, temporary structures are being constructed at the already existing barracks at Daru and Makeni, and at new locations in Simbakoro, Kailahun, Yele, Kabala, Kambia, Bo and Pujehun. Despite some delays in this programme, progress has been recorded at the project sites in Makeni, Kailahun, Simbakoro and Kabala.

17. With the gradual improvement in its operational capacity, the RSLAF has been carrying out effective patrolling of both the border areas and Sierra Leone's waters. However, the army continues to rely on UNAMSIL for some logistic support, in the areas along the Liberian border, where the Mission MI-24 helicopter gunships are routinely patrolling. Joint patrols with the police are also being carried out in Freetown and in other parts of the country. These patrols have not only served to enhance the confidence of the security agencies, but have also enabled UNAMSIL to assess their capacity to act independently.

## C. Reintegration of ex-combatants

18. Since my last report, the availability of reintegration opportunities to former combatants has improved, with more than 5,500 additional ex-combatants benefiting from new projects. According to the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, as of June 2003, there is a remaining caseload of 9,100 ex-combatants who are yet to benefit from reintegration projects. The Government intends to complete the programme by the end of 2003. However, there is still a shortfall, estimated at $3 million, in the World Bank-managed Multi-Donor Trust Fund for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

19. The reintegration of ex-combatants will continue to be central to the consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone. However, it should be stressed that the long-term reintegration of the ex-combatants can only be achieved through societal cohesion and the revival of the war-ravaged economy. To this end, development partners have expressed support for the planned transition to community-based reintegration, under which the long-term needs of the ex-combatants will be addressed as part of the overall needs of their communities.

20. In order to address the issue of residual small arms and light weapons in Sierra Leone, UNDP is implementing a community arms collection and development programme, which is aimed at developing new firearms-licensing procedures and a small-arms database. It has so far tested an "arms-for-development" approach in four chiefdoms, where communities were encouraged to surrender weapons in exchange for development projects. So far, this experiment has worked well, with some 250 weapons and some 800 pieces of ammunition collected and the programme will be gradually expanded to other chiefdoms throughout the country.

## D. Consolidating State authority

21. The deployment of government officials to all districts was completed during the reporting period. However, the capacity of government structures to deliver services in the provinces remains feeble, owing to challenges posed by logistic and infrastructure constraints, as well as the lack of qualified personnel. The infrastructure constraints are being addressed through the rehabilitation of district offices in some areas. In an effort to address the logistics challenges, the Government recently provided vehicles to some district offices. Nevertheless, the continuing lack of basic facilities and equipment still hampers the effective functioning of most government structures in the provinces.

22. The Government continues to devote considerable attention to the issue of decentralization of local government. The nationwide district consultations on decentralization and local government reform were completed in April. The consultations enabled the Government to seek opinions on issues such as the nature and type of local government structures to be put in place, and the type of local elections to be conducted in the near future. In a commendable initiative intended to bring the Government closer to the people, President Kabbah has started holding cabinet sessions in the provincial and district capitals.

23. Progress has also been made in the rehabilitation of the judicial sector. Courts have resumed sittings in all districts as a result of the assistance provided by the United Kingdom, UNDP and UNAMSIL in rehabilitating the court infrastructure. Justices of the Peace have been assigned to over 20 locations throughout the country. However, qualified Sierra Leonean lawyers continue to shy away from the bench because of the low remuneration offered for such positions. This in turn has not only contributed to the absence of an effective judiciary in the provinces, but also has the potential to encourage practices capable of eroding the credibility of the administration of justice.

## E. Restoration of government control over diamond mining

24. There has been a significant increase in licensed mining activities and in official exports of rough diamonds during the period under review. More government mining officers and monitors have been deployed to the diamond mining areas. Official exports are reported to have reached $28 million between January and May 2003. However, there is ample evidence that illicit mining persists in many parts of the country. Furthermore, in spite of advances in this regard, the Government has yet to put in place a comprehensive legislative framework and a mining policy for more effective control and regulation of diamond mining activities.

25. In recent months, UNAMSIL has intensified support to the Government's effort to curb illicit diamond mining activities. In this connection, the Mission has facilitated the Government's ground and aerial surveys of mining sites in selected areas. The main objective of these surveys is to monitor illegal mining activities by mapping boundaries of the licensed sites with precision. The initial phase of these surveys is targeting small-scale mechanized mining in different parts of the country. UNAMSIL is also encouraging government officials to make use of the services of

Radio UNAMSIL to sensitize the population on the need to curb illicit mining and illegal trade in rough diamonds.

26. Under the Diamond Area Community Development Fund, the Government has so far disbursed about $630,000 generated out of licensing fees to various chiefdoms. UNDP is supporting this programme by co-financing development projects implemented through the Fund. The United States Government is also providing revolving credit to diamond miners in Kono district.

27. The Government, with assistance from the World Bank, has developed a draft Mining Policy and Strategies for Post-war Recovery, which would promote the private sector, strengthen the valuation system of exports, institute an effective regulatory regime and enforcement measures, and lead to the creation of conditions that are conducive to investment in this sector. Considering the complex nature of this sector and its critical importance for the country's security and economy, the Government will need increased assistance and support from its development partners to reform the existing institutional structures and implement a comprehensive mining policy.

## IV. Drawdown of UNAMSIL

28. Guided by the benchmarks described above, the drawdown of UNAMSIL has so far proceeded as planned, and the first two phases have been successfully completed. As indicated in my last report (S/2003/321), under phase 1 a total of 600 troops from the Nigerian and Bangladeshi contingents were repatriated in November 2002. This brought the Mission's troop strength down from the authorized ceiling of 17,500 to 16,900 personnel.

29. The implementation of phase 2 started in December 2002 and was completed by 31 May 2003. Under this phase, a total of 3,826 troops, consisting of the Pakistani artillery unit, the Ghanaian sector 3 headquarters staff, the Kenyan sector 2 headquarters staff, the Bangladeshi logistics battalion, some elements of the Bangladesh signals battalion, a Nigerian battalion, the Guinean battalion, and the Ghanaian level 2 hospital, were withdrawn from the Mission. The Mission's troop strength was thus reduced from 16,900 to the current level of 13,074 personnel.

30. In order to maintain the appropriate military capability to provide effective security throughout the country, UNAMSIL has created an air mobile reserve that enables it to reach the areas it has vacated. The reserve can be rapidly deployed to the vacated areas for short periods of time, either at the request of Sierra Leone's security forces, or upon the advice of UNAMSIL's military observers, who continue to closely monitor the security situation in these areas. Arrangements have also been put into place for enhanced coordination and joint efforts with the Sierra Leone police and army for the protection of strategic locations, including the State House, the central prison, Lungi airport and facilities of the Special Court in Freetown and Bonthe Island.

31. Pursuant to the request contained in paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1470 (2003), UNAMSIL and the Secretariat have conducted a careful review of the current pace of the Mission's drawdown and developed options for an accelerated and a slower withdrawal, taking into account the evolving security situation and the ongoing efforts to strengthen the capacity and ability of Sierra Leone's security

sector to take responsibility for the country's internal and external security. In this connection, the following options have been identified:

## A. Accelerated withdrawal option

32. The accelerated drawdown option would see all UNAMSIL troops leaving Sierra Leone by June 2004. Under the first stage of this option, a Nigerian battalion based in Makeni and a Bangladeshi battalion in Magburaka would be repatriated in August 2003. This would reduce the troop strength of UNAMSIL from the current 13,074 to 11,500 troops. The second stage would follow immediately thereafter, with the repatriation of the Bangladeshi signals company and the Bangladeshi medical unit between September and November 2003, thus further reducing the troop strength of the mission to 10,500 personnel. There will have to be some backfilling in sensitive areas, such as Makeni and Magburaka since it is unlikely that the Sierra Leone police would be in a position to immediately fill the security vacuum created by the withdrawal of the United Nations troops.

33. The third stage would begin in early February 2004, with the repatriation of the entire Pakistani contingent and the Zambian battalion from Sector East. Consequently, full responsibility for security in the sensitive eastern border region and the main diamond mining areas would be handed over to the Sierra Leonean security forces. This stage would be completed by the end of March 2004, which would bring UNAMSIL's troop level down to 5,000 personnel, who will be concentrated in Sector West (Freetown and Lungi). The repatriation of the last 5,000 troops would commence by late April 2004, in order to achieve total withdrawal by June 2004.

## B. Delayed withdrawal option

34. The delayed drawdown option envisages UNAMSIL completing its withdrawal from Sierra Leone by June 2005. Under this option, the upcoming phase 3 of the current drawdown plan would still proceed in four stages. The first stage would see the repatriation of a Nigerian battalion from Makeni in August 2003. The Makeni area would be backfilled by a company from a Bangladeshi battalion. At the end of this stage, the force strength would have been reduced from the current 13,000 to 12,300. During the second stage, a Bangladeshi battalion based in Magburaka would be repatriated in November 2003, thus bringing the number of troops to 11,500.

35. A modest UNAMSIL presence would be maintained in Sector Centre until December 2004, comprising the Sector Headquarters, a Bangladeshi signals company, a Bangladeshi medical unit and a Bangladeshi battalion based in Bo. With the repatriation of these units by the end of December 2004, in the third stage, the Mission's troop strength would fall to 10,500 personnel. The three sectors would then be reorganized into two Sectors (West and East). The fourth stage, the withdrawal of Sector East, would be implemented in March and April 2005, and would see the Mission's troop levels reduced to about 5,000. All elements of the 3,800-strong Pakistani contingent, including Sector East Headquarters staff, its three infantry battalions, the aviation unit, engineers, the level 2 medical hospital, and other logistic and supporting units, would be repatriated in their entirety in one move during this period. The last elements of Sector East, consisting of the Zambian

battalion would also be repatriated at this stage. This would complete the final stage of phase 3 of the drawdown.

36. The remaining 5,000 troops would be concentrated in the only remaining Sector West (around the Freetown and Lungi peninsulas), where attention will be focused on the protection of key points within Freetown. Despite its withdrawal from the rest of Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL would continue to retain its capability, albeit limited, to extend support to the country's security agencies by making use of its Force Reserve, as needed. The final withdrawal of the last 5,000 troops (phase 4) would begin in May 2005 and would be completed by June.

## C. Modified status quo drawdown option

37. The third option would be to modify the current pace of the drawdown process, with a view to completing the withdrawal of UNAMSIL from Sierra Leone by December 2004. Under this option, the forthcoming phase 3 of the current drawdown plan would be conducted in four stages. The first stage would see the repatriation of a Nigerian battalion from Makeni in August 2003. Makeni would be backfilled by a company from a Bangladeshi battalion. At the end of this stage, the force strength would have been reduced from the current 13,000 to 12,300. During the second stage, another Bangladeshi battalion based in Magburaka would be repatriated in November 2003. This would reduce the number of troops to 11,500. Thereafter, the third stage would run from December 2003 to June 2004 and would entail the repatriation of Sector Centre Headquarters staff, including a Bangladeshi signals company and a Bangladeshi Medical Unit, as well as a Bangladeshi battalion repatriating in June 2004. At the end of this stage, the Mission's troop strength would have fallen to 10,500 personnel. The three sectors would thence be reorganized into two Sectors (West and East).

38. The fourth stage of this option would be implemented between September and October 2004 and would see the Mission's troop levels reduced to 5,000 troops. All elements of the 3,800-strong Pakistani contingent, together with their supporting units, would be repatriated in their entirety in one move during this period. The last elements of Sector East, consisting of the Zambian battalion would also be repatriated at this stage.

39. The remaining 5,000 troops would be concentrated around the Freetown and Lungi peninsulas, where attention will be focused primarily on the protection of key points within Freetown. Despite its withdrawal from the rest of Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL would retain a limited capability to extend security support to the country's security agencies by making use of its Force Reserve, as may be required. The final withdrawal (phase 4) would begin in early November 2004 and would see the complete withdrawal of the remaining 5,000 troops by December 2004.

40. It is pertinent to indicate that, under all three options described above, the presence of United Nations military observers will be required throughout the drawdown process. They will continue to conduct intensive monitoring activities throughout the country, alerting the Force Commander to important developments and, if necessary, advising the Mission to deploy the Force reserve to enhance security. At present, the authorized strength of the Mission's military observers component is 256 officers. They are deployed in 15 teams or sub-teams, with each team responsible for a defined area.

# V. Monitoring and promoting human rights, national reconciliation and justice

41. Significant progress has been made in the efforts to promote human rights, national reconciliation and justice, and in addressing the needs of children affected by the conflict, which are key aspects of the overall peace consolidation strategy. In this connection, the work of the Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has gathered pace.

## A. Monitoring and promoting human rights

42. In the course of monitoring the human rights situation in the country, UNAMSIL Human Rights Officers visited police stations and prisons, and noted overcrowding, unhygienic detention cells, loose separation of categories of prisoners and detention of suspects in police stations beyond the legal time limit. These issues continue to constitute a source of concern for the Mission. Despite efforts to improve the situation, paucity of material and logistics have seriously undermined the efficiency of prison and police administrations and have contributed to the existing deplorable conditions in some prisons and police stations. UNAMSIL will continue to encourage the relevant authorities to take appropriate measures to address these needs. The Mission provided human rights training for the security agencies and civil society. It also continued its research on the situation of the country's surviving war amputees, which it shared with the Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

43. No significant developments occurred during the period under review in the trials of the so-called West Side Boys and the former RUF members, who were arrested in the aftermath of the crisis of May 2000. The accused remained without defence counsels or access to legal counselling. Pre-trial hearings in the treason and misprision charges against the 17 individuals, including a woman and a juvenile, arrested in connection with the Wellington Barracks incident in January 2003, which commenced in March at the Magistrate Court in Freetown, was referred to the High Court on 31 March. Since then, no tangible progress has been made in the trials. Five attorneys have volunteered their services on a pro bono basis to represent the 17 accused persons. All the accused, including the juvenile, were refused bail, and were thus remanded in prisons.

### 1. Protection of children

44. The Government, child protection agencies, UNAMSIL and the newly established National Commission for War Affected Children are increasing collaboration in addressing the most pressing concerns for children. A task force has been established to respond to the increasing numbers of street children and a community-based reintegration strategy for child ex-combatants and other separated children is being implemented to ensure their successful long-term reintegration. The Memoranda of Understanding concluded by the Sierra Leone police and the RSLAF with child protection agencies on the incorporation of training in child rights and child protection in their training curricula is being successfully implemented. Within UNAMSIL, the mainstreaming of child protection has

continued, with the systematic training of the civilian, military and UNCIVPOL components of the Mission in child rights and protection as a key element.

45. The Voice of Children Radio initiative, a key strategy in involving children more actively in the national reconciliation and peace-building process, has commenced operation throughout the country. To date, more than 100 children have been trained as programme presenters, researchers and reporters. Voice of Children has also aired special events and performances for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Special Court and the Government of Sierra Leone.

### 2. Truth and Reconciliation Commission

46. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission began its public hearings on 14 April, with victims and perpetrators of the civil war telling their stories in public, and children and female victims testifying in closed-door sessions. Hearings were held in Freetown, Kailahun, Bo, Port Loko, Kabala, Kenema and other locations. Thus far, public opinion has been supportive of the process, as Sierra Leoneans from all walks of life, including the ex-combatants and the amputees, continue to testify on their roles and experiences in the war. In addition to the public hearings, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has commenced thematic hearings. The thousands of statements already obtained from witnesses and the numerous testimonies given so far will, no doubt, go a long way to realizing the Commission's objectives.

47. The Commission is still plagued by financial uncertainties owing to the unresolved shortfall in its budget. During consultations between the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and my Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, in Geneva on 15 May 2003, the funding of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was extensively discussed. The High Commissioner assured my Special Representative that his office was actively sensitizing potential donors in order to fill the funding gap. In this connection, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights conducted a briefing for donors in Geneva on 15 May 2003, during which it presented a revised Truth and Reconciliation Commission budget of $4.5 million. To date, a total of $3.7 million has been pledged, of which only $2.3 million has been received, leaving a shortfall of $0.73 million. UNAMSIL continues to extend logistic and technical support to the Commission, including transportation of the Commission's personnel on UNAMSIL flights within the country. Radio UNAMSIL has aired live coverage of the ongoing public hearings of the Commission and has conducted public sensitization campaigns on the role and objectives of the Commission.

### 3. Special Court

48. In my last report (S/2003/321), I informed the Council that the Special Court had indicted seven individuals considered to bear the greatest responsibility for the crimes committed during the civil war in Sierra Leone. Another individual, the former RUF Security Chief, Augustine Gbao, was transferred into the custody of the Court as a suspect on 20 March and indicted on 16 April. In addition, on 29 May the Special Court announced the indictment of Brima "Bazzy" Kamara, a former member of the AFRC/ex-SLA, and the arrest and temporary detention of the suspects Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa of the CDF. The pre-trial hearings of those in detention have since commenced.

49. On 4 June, the Court announced the indictment of President Charles Taylor of Liberia, which it said had been sealed since 7 March 2003. The case against former RUF leader Foday Sankoh has been adjourned sine die to enable him to undergo psychiatric and physiological examinations to establish his mental fitness to stand trial. This was consequent upon the Special Court physician's opinion that the defendant was in a "catatonic stuporous" state. He was transferred to the UNAMSIL medical level 3 hospital in Freetown, where he has been receiving medical treatment. Negotiations are still under way to meet the requirements set by the Security Council for lifting the existing travel ban and transfer him to a medical level 6 hospital outside Sierra Leone. As indicated earlier, Johnny Paul Koroma, another indictee, was reportedly killed in Liberia, as was Sam Bockarie. On 1 June, the latter's body was returned to Sierra Leone for identification by the Court.

50. UNAMSIL continued to provide logistics and security support to the Special Court. The Mission and the Secretariat have also handed over documents requested by the Special Court to assist it in its investigations. In addition to deploying troops around the Special Court premises in Freetown and in Bonthe Island, UNAMSIL assisted in constructing a perimeter fence at the Bonthe prison, where the indictees are being held. The Mission has also made available to the Court the use of its helicopters to transport the Court's personnel and indictees to and from Bonthe Island, where the trials are taking place. In addition, the Mission has assisted in transporting cargo and construction materials for the Special Court's facilities. UNAMSIL continues to make available to the Court the use of its radio and press facilities for the latter's sensitization campaigns on its activities.

51. In the last week of May, the Special Court submitted to the Management Committee a draft budget for its second year of operations, which begins on 1 July 2003. According to the draft budget, the Court's financial needs for year two stand at $35,305,626. The Management Committee is currently considering ways to assist the Court to address its funding shortfall. Currently, the Special Court has received pledges for only $13,541,500. I therefore wish to appeal to all States to continue to support the Court and provide it with the necessary financial resources to complete its work.

## B. Gender mainstreaming

52. During the reporting period, UNAMSIL's Human Rights Section continued to promote women's rights with its monitoring and capacity-building activities. UNAMSIL visits to police stations, prisons and courts have been conducted with a special focus on cases involving women and girls. In April 2003, UNAMSIL acted as a facilitator in an exercise to field-test gender mainstreaming, developed by a team from the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Gender training has been delivered to peacekeepers and CIVPOL officers. UNAMSIL has also completed the first phase of training of members of the Family Support Units of the Sierra Leone police, which have the mandate to deal with offences against women, children and vulnerable groups.

53. At the three-day Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings held in May 2003 in Freetown on the effects of war on women and girls there was overwhelming and substantive participation of women's groups. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was unanimously encouraged to play an active role in advocating

reforms of customary and common laws, which — according to the submissions made — contributed to gender-based violence and discrimination against women. Meanwhile, the UNAMSIL Gender Specialist has been monitoring and reporting human rights abuses against women and girls and promoting women's human rights. She has also been acting as liaison with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs and creating awareness of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Mission has also been working with women's organizations to input a gender perspective into the procedures for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Special Court and ensure that rape and other forms of gender-based violence are treated as priority crimes.

### C. HIV/AIDS

54. The activities of UNAMSIL's HIV/AIDS Unit continued to focus on awareness training for the Mission's peacekeepers and participation in a United Nations Theme Group on HIV/AIDS. The training programme is intended to equip the peacekeepers with the necessary knowledge on HIV/AIDS transmission, prevention, voluntary counselling and testing, and to make them aware of their responsibilities relating to their Code of Conduct. HIV/AIDS awareness cards prepared in the languages of the respective contingents are distributed to the peacekeepers. The United Nations Theme Group on HIV/AIDS meets every month to work out plans and strategies to assist Sierra Leone in implementing its HIV/AIDS response project.

## VI. Humanitarian recovery and development efforts

55. The level of influx of refugees from Liberia into Sierra Leone decreased significantly during the reporting period. With assistance from UNAMSIL, UNHCR and its partners continued to move refugees away from the border regions in Pujehun and Kailahun districts to camps in the interior. With the opening of an eighth camp in Tobanda, in early April, the absorption capacity has increased and 55,000 Liberian refugees are now accommodated in camps. About 8,500 more are resident in urban areas in Bo, Kenema and Freetown, while 7,500 remain in the border areas waiting to be moved into the camps. Contingency planning for further influxes has been intensified with the recent deterioration of events in Liberia and a site for a ninth camp has been identified and prepared in Nyagbe Bo.

56. There is concern about Liberian combatants who have been infiltrating Sierra Leone among the refugees. In order to preserve the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum, the Government separates these individuals from refugees through security screening and accommodates them at the Mapeh internment facility. Some 324 AFL and 9 LURD fighters are currently accommodated at the internment camp, while their civilian family members are cared for in the refugee camps. Sixty Liberian ex-child soldiers are undergoing an accelerated reintegration programme in refugee camps. President Kabbah has appealed for urgent donor support to sustain and expand the Mapeh internment facility, which is critical to enabling the Government to keep its borders open for refugees while ensuring State security and preserving the civilian character of asylum.

57. UNHCR has moved to a "promoted" phase of repatriating Sierra Leonean refugees from the subregion. To facilitate accelerated repatriation from Guinea, the

Dondou-Belu causeway linking the Languette region of Guinea Forestiere with Kailahun District was opened in March 2003. Despite occasional damage from heavy rains, the causeway remained operational for three months and almost 11,000 Sierra Leoneans have returned through this route. Bi-weekly convoys have also been operating on the Pamalap-Kambia route, bringing in up to 500 passengers per convoy, mainly returning to Kono District. Given the recent closure of the Dondou-Belu causeway, emphasis will now be placed on this route.

58. Repatriation from Liberia, which was progressing slowly, has now been suspended. The flight operations from Monrovia were replaced by a ship operation, which resumed on 10 May. This operation, too, has been suspended until the security situation in Liberia improves. Since 2001, a total of 234,000 Sierra Leoneans have been repatriated (of whom 141,000 were assisted by UNHCR to return). This includes 63,000 from Liberia (48,000 assisted) and 170,000 from Guinea (92,000 assisted). An estimated 47,000 Sierra Leonean refugees remain in Guinea, of whom 25,000 are accommodated in UNHCR camps), an estimated 40,000 remain in Liberia (of whom 16,000 were in camps until the recent LURD advance on Monrovia). The High Commissioner for Refugees, Ruud Lubbers, visited the subregion in May and renewed UNHCR's commitment to help to repatriate all remaining Sierra Leonean refugees who wish to return by June 2004.

59. The national recovery process is gathering pace with schools, hospitals and primary care units being rehabilitated in most districts, and work is under way on numerous roads. Common concerns include poor road conditions, low level of assistance for rebuilding shelter destroyed during the war, shortage of qualified teachers in view of the rapid expansion of school enrolment, and the lack of employment opportunities for young people.

60. A joint UNDP, UNHCR, World Bank and ILO mission visited Sierra Leone in May to review integrated planning for repatriation, reinsertion, rehabilitation and reconstruction, or the "4Rs" process. The mission also engaged in detailed discussions in Freetown, and visited Kono, Kailahun and Kambia districts to review the United Nations country team's integrated response at different stages of recovery. They intend to draw lessons from experiences in Sierra Leone and develop an enhanced framework for integrated planning and recovery interventions in other post-conflict environments.

61. The United Nations country team has finalized the mid-year review of the relief appeal, stressing that the stable internal environment is facilitating reintegration, recovery and repatriation. The appeal was increased to $86 million, to provide adequate assistance for the growing number of Liberian refugees. While some progress has been made in meeting humanitarian and recovery needs, delays in the commitment of resources have hampered efforts to implement activities in time for the planting season and before the heavy rains halt rehabilitation work. The main priorities for the rest of 2003 are to provide adequate assistance and protection to Liberian refugees; support promoted repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees from neighbouring countries; support reintegration efforts and enhance the delivery of education, health, agriculture, water and sanitation and shelter services.

62. Preliminary data indicate that Sierra Leone's economic performance continued to improve during the first part of 2003 despite the oil price shock. The run-up in international petroleum prices, however, reversed both the downward movement of the price level and growth in international reserves achieved in 2002. In April 2003,

Sierra Leone successfully completed the third review of its Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility arrangement with the IMF. All December 2002 performance criteria were met following slippages with respect to September targets for net domestic credit to government due to delays in disbursement of budgetary support and the primary fiscal balance due to overruns in the wage bill. With its successful completion of the third review of the Facility, Sierra Leone became eligible for a second year of interim assistance under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative. While some progress was made in advancing preparation of Sierra Leone's full Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility, at the 20 May 2003 meeting of the Sierra Leone Development Partnership Committee, the Government informed its development partners that the Facility would not likely be ready by the end of 2003.

63. Fiscal and monetary policies need to be carefully managed to blunt the effect of the oil price shock on the recovery, prices, balance of payments and real incomes. After declining 4 per cent in 2002, the consumer price index (CPI) rose 4 per cent in the first quarter of 2003, due to the spike in oil prices. International reserves decreased by 17 per cent and the exchange rate depreciated marginally. Provided policies are well managed, the recent rise in the CPI need not translate into sustained inflation. Unless electricity prices are raised substantially to reflect the run-up in oil prices, the fragile electricity company faces collapse and the fiscal programme could be derailed by large subsidies to the non-poor, leading to the re-emergence of inflation. At the same time, overall fiscal and monetary policies need to be tightened.

64. Propelled by aid inflows, Sierra Leone's external current-account deficit widened to 26 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2002, the exchange rate appreciated, and international reserves increased substantially, to 2.3 months of imports. Fiscal revenue rose to 14.5 per cent of GDP in 2002, exceeding the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility target, mainly reflecting the large increase in imports. Current spending, however, rose to an unsustainably high 29 per cent of GDP. The fiscal deficit (excluding grants) rose to 19.8 per cent of GDP in 2002 (from 15.8 per cent in 2001), compared to a programme target of 26.3 per cent, reflecting capacity constraints that limited government investment outlays to 5.4 per cent of GDP compared to the programme target of 13.2 per cent. Net external financing of the central Government was equivalent to 17 per cent of GDP, while net domestic bank financing of the fiscal deficit was 2.8 per cent of GDP. This domestic bank financing of government operations contributed to keeping real interest rates very high, to the detriment of private sector investment.

## VII. Observations and recommendations

65. The gradual and carefully calibrated approach to the drawdown of UNAMSIL, as approved by the Security Council, is yielding the desired benefits. In particular, the extended presence of the Mission in the country has assured a stable security environment and enabled the Government to make steady progress in consolidating peace, and in promoting national reconciliation, justice and national reconstruction. Tangible progress has been made in the efforts to consolidate peace, including the reintegration of some 48,000 out of the 57,000 disarmed ex-combatants, the completion of the resettlement of internally displaced persons, the acceleration of the repatriation and resettlement of Sierra Leonean refugees, until the disruption by

the recent events in Liberia, and the restoration of the Government's authority throughout the country, although much more remains to be done to enhance the Government's capacity to deliver public services to the population in the provinces. The human rights situation in the country continues to improve, while the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court has progressed satisfactorily, despite the financial difficulties that continue to plague both organizations.

66. Although illegal diamond mining continues to pose serious challenges and remains a potential source of instability, the Government has taken commendable measures to curb these activities. However, the absence of effective policing in the mining areas remains a cause for concern as it creates a vacuum that could constitute a serious security challenge in these strategically important areas. Furthermore, although a significant increase in licensed mining and in official exports of diamonds has been reported during the reporting period, the industry is not yet generating sufficient revenue to guarantee sustained economic recovery. The Government therefore needs to ensure a firm grip on this strategic industry, not only for security reasons, but also with a view to ensuring that this important sector contributes to the accelerated growth of the economy.

67. The impact of the conflict in Liberia on Sierra Leone's stability remains a source of serious concern, as does the new dimension added to the instability in the subregion by the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. It is inconceivable to contemplate sustained peace in Sierra Leone in an unstable neighbourhood. The international community must, therefore, provide the necessary support for the ongoing peace negotiations on Liberia and the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement in Côte d'Ivoire, which promise to pave the way for the return of stability to the subregion. In the long term, the destabilizing impact of the circulation of "freelance" fighters and small arms among the countries of the West Africa subregion underlines the need for an effective, concerted approach by Governments and all stakeholders towards promoting peace and development in the subregion.

68. It is gratifying to note that the drawdown of UNAMSIL has so far proceeded without hitches. As requested by the Security Council, the present report provides the options for the remaining phases of the drawdown process in paragraphs 32 to 40 above. Having carefully considered these options, it is recommended that the Security Council approve option (c) — the modified status quo option. As required under paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1470 (2003), this recommendation is based on a thorough assessment of the prevailing security situation and an evaluation of the capacity and ability of the Sierra Leone sector to take responsibility for internal and external security. That assessment is provided in sections II and III of the present report.

69. As indicated in section III, the rate of attainment of the key security benchmark, as well as other secondary benchmarks identified in my fifteenth report (S/2002/987), gives no cause for optimism that any accelerated implementation of the drawdown plan would be advisable. Neither the Sierra Leone police nor the armed forces are expected to have made such rapid progress in enhancing their capacities as to see them totally assuming internal and external security responsibilities by mid-2004 without UNAMSIL's support. Much still needs to be done to strengthen the capacities of both the police and army, and to facilitate their effective presence in the areas being vacated by UNAMSIL.

70. As for option (b), the delayed withdrawal of UNAMSIL would be desirable only in the event that either the internal security situation or the conflict in Liberia deteriorates to a level that would require a prolonged presence of UNAMSIL to protect the Sierra Leone Government and the territorial integrity of the countr. A delayed withdrawal might also be appropriate if Sierra Leone's security forces encounter serious difficulties in assuming responsibilities in the areas vacated by UNAMSIL.

71. Irrespective of the option the Security Council decides to approve, at the appropriate time before the final withdrawal of UNAMSIL, the Council will need to take careful stock of the key security benchmarks, with a view to determining whether a continued residual presence of UNAMSIL would be needed to complete the training of the Sierra Leone police. In this regard, it should be noted that the Sierra Leone police development plan does not envisage the completion of the training of new cadets until the end of 2005. At that time also, should the Council consider it necessary, the security needs of the Special Court vis-à-vis the capacity of Sierra Leone's security sector would be assessed.

72. Should the Council approve my recommendation to proceed with the modified status quo drawdown option (c), it would be my intention to submit to the Council, additional recommendations on matters concerning the residual presence of UNAMSIL in early 2004, in order to allow sufficient time for the requisite planning process. In the meantime, it is important for international partners to continue to assist the Government of Sierra Leone to achieve greater progress in the critical areas of security and governance.

73. Lastly, I wish to express my appreciation to the Security Council and troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as to ECOWAS and donor countries for their continued support to UNAMSIL. I also commend my Special Representative, Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji, all UNAMSIL military and civilian personnel and other United Nations agencies, as well as other humanitarian and development partners for the progress made in consolidating peace in Sierra Leone during the reporting period.

# Annex

## United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 1 June 2003

Authorized military strength: 13,000 (not including up to 260 military observers)

| | *Military observers* | *Staff officers* | *Troops* | *Sector headquarters staff* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bangladesh | 15 | 15 | 2 209 | 65 | 2 304 |
| Bolivia | 6 | | | | 6 |
| Canada | 5 | | | | 5 |
| China | 6 | | | | 6 |
| Croatia | 10 | | | | 10 |
| Czech Republic | 5 | | | | 5 |
| Denmark | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Egypt | 10 | | | | 10 |
| Gambia | 15 | | | | 15 |
| Germany | | | 16 | | 16 |
| Ghana | 7 | 9 | 776 | | 792 |
| Guinea | 12 | 1 | | | 13 |
| Indonesia | 10 | | | | 10 |
| Jordan | 10 | 1 | 120 | | 131 |
| Kenya | 11 | 13 | 991 | | 1 015 |
| Kyrgyzstan | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Malaysia | 10 | | | | 10 |
| Mali | 0 | | | | 0 |
| Nepal | 10 | 4 | 798 | | 812 |
| New Zealand | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Nigeria | 9 | 15 | 2 323 | 59 | 2 406 |
| Pakistan | 15 | 16 | 3 784 | 48 | 3 863 |
| Russian Federation | 13 | 4 | 109 | | 126 |
| Slovakia | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Sweden | 3 | | | | 3 |
| United Republic of Tanzania | 12 | | | | 12 |
| Thailand | 5 | 5 | | | 10 |

| | *Military observers* | *Staff officers* | *Troops* | *Sector headquarters staff* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ukraine | 5 | 4 | 613 | | 622 |
| United Kingdom | 14 | 6 | | | 20 |
| Uruguay | 11 | | | | 11 |
| Zambia | 9 | 5 | 819 | | 833 |
| **Total** | **246** | **98** | **12 558** | **172** | **13 074** |

Force Commander: Kenya; Deputy Force Commander/Chief Military Observer: Pakistan.

Civilian police: Bangladesh: 2; Canada: 9; Cameroon: 1; Gambia: 3; Ghana: 8; India: 5; Jordan: 7; Kenya: 12; Malaysia: 6; Nepal: 13; Nigeria: 4; Norway: 3; Senegal: 7; Sri Lanka: 5; Sweden: 2; United Republic of Tanzania: 1; Zimbabwe: 11; Malawi: 1; Mauritius: 2; Russian Federation: 3; United Kingdom: 10; Turkey: 5; Zambia: 7; Namibia: 2.

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